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BY

MARY MITCHELL

[From Proceedings of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1902]

MADISON
STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WISCONSIN
1903

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BY MARY MITCHELL.

My father, Robert Irwin, jr., came to Green Bay from Erie, Pa., in the year 1817. He was engaged in trade with the Indians and the few white settlers there at that time. The troops had been stationed at Green Bay about a year before, and their barracks at that time were on a hill about three miles from the mouth of the Fox river, called Camp Smith. It was in the vicinity of these barracks that the village sprang up where my father built his house, to which he brought my mother in the year 1820, a bride of nineteen. She was a native of Erie, Pa., and left a large circle of relatives; her grandfather, Col. Seth Reed, having been one of the first settlers of that place.

It was on the first of October that my mother sailed up the beautiful Fox, upon the banks of which she resided most of the time for over sixty years. I have often heard her describe the day as being one of those soft, hazy days in autumn, so peculiar to our Indian summer, which after a stormy voyage up the lakes on a very small sailing vessel (having been driven back twice from the mouth of Green Bay to Mackinaw by high winds), must have been delightful to her. There were but two or three American families outside the fort, but quite a number of French extraction, whom my parents ever held as valued friends.

My first recollection of a home is of a house a story and a half high, situated on rising ground sloping down to the river.

[1] Condensed and edited for the present publication, by arrangement with the author, from articles published by her in the Menominee (Mich.) *Herald*, Oct. 16, 18, 20, 1899.—Ed.

It was built of hewn logs, weather boarded outside and plastered within, and furnished comfortably. The only mode of transportation was by sailing vessels; and winter setting in early, the furniture and carpets did not arrive the first winter, so that my mother's carpets were colored Indian blankets—for bare floors were not to be endured in those severe winters. As a child I thought it a beautiful home, for my parents devoted much time to improving the grounds and making it what it was previous to my father's death, a pleasant place for that far-away land. Indeed, the first American settlers there knew scarcely anything of pioneer life as I have seen it since in other parts of the West. Our houses were comfortable, if not elegant, and furnished as nearly like Eastern homes as was possible, considering the difficulties of transportation. We knew nothing of a family living in one lower room, and climbing by a ladder to the sleeping room above.

There were many Indians around Green Bay, and my mother was in great fear of them for some time. One little incident she used to relate to her children: one day she saw a canoe filled with Indians land at the foot of the hill, and several of the savages came up and asked in their own language for my father. As my mother did not understand them, she was very much frightened, supposing they intended to harm her. They returned to the canoe and came running up the second time; she thought then they must have gone for their guns or knives, and was in great terror, until they came to her with some silver bands which they used to wear on their arms, and slipped them on her wrists as a token of good will. Then they paddled down the river to my father's store, three miles off, and told him his squaw was afraid of them.

Fort Howard (after which the present city of that name is called) was built in 1820, on the bank of the Fox River, about a mile from its mouth. It was substantially constructed and painted white, presenting a beautiful appearance, surrounded on two sides by the forest, the green sward sloping down to the river's edge in front; while farther on, along the bank, were the gardens and fields cultivated by the soldiers.

The society of the officers and their families was nearly all

that my mother had for two or three years, when my grandfather, Robert Irwin, sr., came with his family from Detroit. One of my uncles and four sisters of my father married and settled near us. Two of my widowed aunts, still live at Green Bay at an advanced age. I was born at Green Bay, July 18, 1821, being the first white child of actual settlers born in Wisconsin, and until a few years ago, it was my home. Many of the officers at the fort have since figured in our country's history. In the summer of 1824, during a severe thunder storm, a house in the old barracks occupied by Capt. D. Curtis, was struck by lightning and Mrs. Curtis and a man servant were killed. Mrs. Curtis was a sister of Major Whistler, the mother of Mrs. General Rucker, and grandmother of Mrs. Philip Sheridan.

In those days the only mode of communication with the outside world was by water—in summer on sailing vessels, with occasionally a steamboat bringing a pleasure party. In the winter, the mail was brought by a man once a month from Chicago. The government had not established a mail route, and the expenses of the carrier were paid by voluntary subscription of the citizens and the military post-fund of Fort Howard. The carrier walked the distance, 200 miles, through a trackless wilderness, exposed to the dangers of starvation, of perishing with cold, of falling into the hands of savage Indians, or of becoming a prey to wild beasts. In addition to the mail matter he had to carry provisions enough to last him during his trip, which with the blankets for his bed, made no small load, and rendered traveling very irksome when the snow was deep. At night he slept on the bare ground or scooped out the snow to form a couch, and there lay with the sky above him and the glittering eyes of wild beasts all around him. One of the carriers made a trip with the mail from Green Bay to Detroit in 1821, and camped one night where Michigan City now stands, using his bag of provisions as a pillow. He dreamed that he was rolling down hill, when waking suddenly he found that a large black wolf was attempting to make way with his provisions. He is said to have shot the wolf and regained his supplies. The day on which the mail was expected was a gala

day, the inhabitants of the village thinking of nothing else, and many going out along the trail for several miles to meet the carrier. As my father was the postmaster, I have often seen the carrier coming in, bent almost double, and looking weary and travel-worn.

A school was taught at the fort, which I attended at the age of six years, boarding in the family of the teacher, Gen. A. G. Ellis. My first recollection of attending church was to hear the Rev. Eleazer Williams, afterwards known as the would-be Dauphin. He was a missionary of the Protestant Episcopal church to the Oneidas, who lived about eight miles from our village, and he preached occasionally for us. There was no regular preaching until about 1827, when Rev. R. F. Cadle was sent by the board of missions of the same denomination to establish a school for the benefit of the Indian and French children. The children of the village attended the school as day scholars. The mission house was the second frame house built in the present state of Wisconsin, and was thought at the time to be a fine mansion.

About the year 1827 or 1828, a treaty was made with the Indians at Green Bay, at the gathering for which, there were present about 3,000 Indians. Gov. Lewis Cass and a number of the commissioners were quartered at our house; there were then no hotels, and my father had the contract to board them; and as our house was not large enough to furnish a dining room of suitable size, my father had a temporary one built, the frame and roof thatched with the rough bark of trees, such as the French settlers used.

It was somewhere about 1828 or 1829 that one of our citizens, Henry S. Baird, proposed taking his wife and family to Prairie du Chien in a bark canoe manned by Indians. He invited two young ladies, aunts of mine, to accompany them. When they started on their journey a party of ladies and gentlemen, among whom were my parents, made ready to escort them a short distance. My parents took me with them. One of the ladies of the party was Miss Frances Henshaw, a sister of Mrs. Whitney of our place, and afterwards the wife of the Rev. Truman Post of St. Louis. She was the life of the

party. Our boat was what was called a Mackinaw boat, rowed by French voyageurs. We spent the first night at the home of one of the old settlers, Augustine Grignon, at Kaukauna, where we were most hospitably entertained. The second night we encamped on Doty's Island, now Menasha; but about midnight we were aroused by heavy thunder, and were obliged to leave the tent, the gentlemen fearing the tree under which it was pitched might be struck by lightning. A shelter was made of the boat's awning, which was taken off for the occasion. While lying under this, on the outside edge, with the rain pattering on my face, I remember thinking I could not see much pleasure in that kind of excursion, and wishing I were at home. The next morning we bade adieu to our friends as they started across Lake Winnebago, wishing them *bon voyage*, while our party turned their faces homeward. The rain poured down all day, making it necessary constantly to bail the boat. Those were not days of rubber shoes, waterproofs or gossamers, and my readers may imagine our condition. At the rapids at Kaukauna we were obliged to walk around, while the men in the boat dashed over them. The portage path was about half a mile in length, and the remembrance uppermost in my mind is of a thorough drenching, and that the red clay on our feet made it almost impossible for us to walk. The rain increasing and darkness coming on, the men refused to go any farther that night. They ran the boat ashore and left us. As there was no house near where we could find shelter, our situation for a time was not an enviable one. However, by offering them more money, the men were prevailed upon to start again, and we arrived home towards morning.

One of the events in those far off days was the annual payment to the Indians, in autumn of each year. As the traders advanced goods to the Indians during the year, they were obliged to be on the ground when the Indians received their money in order to secure their pay. There was a general stampede of the male portion of the place, and the women were "left alone in their glory." Mess chests larger than a Saratoga trunk were packed with the choicest viands from the larders and everything done for the comfort of those who had to

rough it, sometimes for more than a month. Could the incidents of those payment gatherings be recorded, as I have heard them related from year to year by friends who were actors in them, it would form an amusing history.

In the year 1829, Daniel Whitney, who came to Green Bay in 1819, laid out the town which is now the city of Green Bay, calling it Navarino. A few years later, the American Fur Company laid out a town adjoining on the south, called Astor. Both villages were afterwards united under the name of Green Bay. Mr. Whitney was an enterprising man and one of sterling worth, and was well known by the early settlers of Chicago. Indeed, I may say the same of others of our small town. Morgan L. Martin, a young lawyer, arrived at Green Bay in 1827, and was always identified with its interests as well as those of the state. He was elected delegate to congress in 1845, and through his efforts a bill was passed for the improvement of the Fox and Wisconsin rivers, to which object he devoted time, energies, and fortune. He occupied many offices of trust until his death, nearly four years ago, when with faculties unimpaired he literally stepped out of the judge's seat to lie down and die, beloved by all who knew him.

In 1832 came the Black Hawk War. Although we were not molested, the inhabitants were quite alarmed for a time. The fort was undergoing repairs, and the pickets being down it was no place of safety. My father had a company under his command, but their services were not required.

In 1833 occurred the death of my father. He had received the appointment of Indian agent at Fort Winnebago (now Portage), and proceeded at once to enter upon his duties, leaving his family to follow him in a few weeks. He made the journey in a bark canoe, accompanied by his brother, since his health was far from being good. But he had scarcely been there a month before he was prostrated by illness, and died in a few hours. Owing to the difficulty of communication, my mother did not hear of his illness until it was too late to reach him. She started, however, on horseback, and went as far as Buttes des Mortes, where she met my uncle, bearing the sad intelligence to her that she was a widow.

It may not be uninteresting here to mention a discussion between my parents, as to whether a cooking stove should be sent for, with other articles of furniture for our new home. My mother decided that she preferred the old way, cooking over a fire place instead of experimenting with a cooking stove. In the very early years of my life we knew nothing of matches, although they may have come into use at the East. There was always a flint, steel, and tinder box in the house, but some could not use these, and so the coals were covered at night. Should they die out we were obliged to borrow fire from the neighbors. I remember being sent on this errand to my grandfather's when a small child.

In July, 1833, I was sent to Erie, Pa., to school and was placed under the care of John H. Kinzie, whose name is identified with Chicago's early days. He had been Indian agent at Fort Winnebago previous to my father's appointment. His family, consisting of his mother, his wife, and one child, his sister, Mrs. Helm, her son, and a young brother of Mrs. Kinzie, Julien McGill, were on their way East. We embarked on a small steamer, the "William Penn," Capt. John Wight of Erie, who by the way, was captain of the small sailing vessel on which my mother made her first trip to Green Bay. We went first to Chicago, and from Green Bay to that place there was but one house on the west shore of the lake, that of Solomon Juneau at Milwaukee. The boat anchored out in the lake when they stopped to wood— as coal was not used in those days on the boats. We reached Chicago on the ninth of July, after a passage of nearly three days. As there was no pier, the vessel anchored some distance out in the lake, and we were rowed ashore in boats. We had had very rough weather and I had suffered with sea-sickness nearly all the way. I was lifted out of my berth and laid on a bed in the bottom of the row boat, a poor, homesick child. The kindness of those friends, I can never forget.

On reaching shore we landed at Fort Dearborn, and passing through it, we went to the house of Col. Beaubien, where we were hospitably entertained while the boat lay in the harbor. I remember walking with one of the daughters of Col. Beau-

bien, on the lake shore, where we saw a number of graves of those who had been stricken down with cholera the year before, which were so near the shore that the waves had washed away the earth and partially uncovered some of the coffins. Little did I dream that I should live to see a city such as Chicago is today, where, as I remember, it was seemingly only a stretch of sand and prairie. I must confess that the river looked more attractive than it does at the present time.

There were few houses occupied by the early settlers; three frame two-story buildings owned by Newberry & Dole, Philo Carpenter, and P. F. Peck. The latter was the father of Ferd Peck, now so interested in the Auditorium and the Columbian fair, and commissioner to the Paris exposition of 1900. That year three churches had been organized in Chicago, the first Presbyterian, the first Baptist, and the first Methodist. A Catholic priest also arrived in 1833. The first public Protestant Episcopal services were held in the first Presbyterian church, by request of its minister, and Mr. John Kinzie, Mrs. Kinzie, Mrs. Helm, and Miss Chappel (afterward Mrs. Porter), distributed prayerbooks. The lighthouse had been built the year before, on the Fort Dearborn reservation. The keeper was a son of General Brady, after whom the fort at Sault Ste. Mary was named. I did not then see or know Reverend Mr. Porter, who in May of that year had come to Chicago from Fort Brady, with Major and Mrs. Fowle and their infant daughter. That daughter Mr. Porter first met thirty-one years afterwards in Boston, and learned that she and her husband, Henry F. Durant, were engaged in building Wellesley college, which a few years later he visited with Mr. and Mrs. Durant.

In the autumn of 1833, Miss Eliza Chappel opened the first school in Chicago in John Wright's log store, across the street from Fort Dearborn. This building was presented to her by Mr. Wright as soon as he had finished his frame store. Later the school was moved to the Presbyterian church on the southwest corner of Lake and Clark streets. Miss Chappell's assistants were Miss Elizabeth Beach and a Miss Leavenworth.

After remaining in Chicago for a day, we again took passage

on the boat, and continued our journey up the east shore of the lake. We stopped at St. Joseph, that being the only settlement on that side, and halted at Grand Haven to wood. Our next stopping place was at Mackinac, in those days the headquarters of the American Fur Company. From that place to Detroit there was but one stopping place, on the River St. Clair, at or near Fort Gratiot. Ten days were occupied in making this journey.

One little incident which occurred the next winter after this trip was a visit from Mr. Kinzie and his sister, Mrs. Helm, on their return from their mother's funeral. They stopped late one evening at Erie, where I was attending school, and inquired of the proprietor of the hotel, who was an uncle of my mother, where I could be found. He sent for me to come to the hotel. I was aroused from sleep in order to go, delighted to see anyone of the old home friends.

Soon after my father's death, my mother removed to Ohio to educate her family. We returned to Green Bay in the autumn of 1836, in the height of the land speculation when there was much immigration to that place and to Chicago also. The old steamer Michigan at one time brought one thousand passengers in her cabin, their fare amounting to $10,000, while the steerage more than paid the expenses of the trip. The inhabitants of the "jumping off" place, as Green Bay was at that time designated, were hopeful that it would become a great business centre. But they were doomed to disappointment, as the heavily timbered country around it did not offer the inducements to settlers which the prairie lands in the southern part of the territory and in Illinois presented. However, people came there, houses were built, and (to quote the words of one who was describing those times) "Brave men and cultivated women lived there then who visited, talked and read; wrote letters on large sheets of paper folded without envelope and sealed with wafers; such people lived there and in their simple content did not suspect how many things were lacking to make them happy."

In the autumn of 1837, Reverend Stephen Peet, who was afterwards one of the chief instruments in the founding of

Beloit college and also of the Chicago Theological seminary, came to Green Bay as pastor of the first Presbyterian church in the state. During his pastorate of two years the church was built—the second Protestant church in the state—the first being a small one erected at Stockbridge for the use of the mission there for the Indians. The lots for the site of the Presbyterian church were given by John Jacob Astor, Rainsay Crooks, and Robert Stuart. In giving the lots for the church Mr. Astor wrote to his agent, N. Goodell:

You charge in your account 87 cts. for recording deed from the Presbyterian church of lots 7 and 8, block 27 (the lots originally given but exchanged for others), which the church ought to pay. Please collect it.

On the other hand, J. J. Astor's name stood at the head of the subscription list for money to build the church, for $300.00. Among the names on that list is Washington Irving's for $50.00. The bell was given within a month or two of the time of the dedication of the church, by Mr. Astor, a copy of whose letter, in answer to the request for the bell, is in my possession.

Yorkville 1st October 1838.

Messrs Stephen Peet, Wm Mitchell, Gardner Childs, Committee.
Gents

Your letter of 1st Sepr. with one from J. D. Doty attached, was duly received, and although I did not expect such a call would have been made upon me, after what I had previously done, yet I have complied with your request, and have purchased today from Mr. Force an excellent Bell of 696 pounds cast by him the present year, it has a fine tone, and will effectually notice all who are disposed to give attention to their duties from its summons. It is addressed to Wm. Mitchell, care of Treat & Carter Buffalo New York, and will be shipped tomorrow on board a Tow Boat for Albany. P. S. You will please settle the account for freight and expenses.

Respectfully Your Obt. Servant
J. J. Astor.

In the winter of 1837 and 1838, a brother of my mother, Seth Reed, whose home was at Green Bay, and who was assistant paymaster to the troops under Major Robert Forsyth, was ordered to Florida for the Seminole war. As there was no road from Green Bay to Chicago (the mail route having been es-

tablished but three years), it was no easy matter to make the journey. However, a vehicle on runners was built, in which my uncle and aunt made the journey, carrying their provisions with them and camping at night. I think they improvised a bed out of the sled, with some shelter overhead. They proceeded to Niles, Mich., in this conveyance, as that was the end of the stage route from the East. My aunt was the first lady to take this journey. Mrs. John H. Kinzie, author of *Wau Bun*, had made the trip a few years before on horseback through the interior of the territory, from Fort Winnebago to Chicago.

In 1840 one of my sisters married, and went to Southport (now Kenosha) to live. She and her husband made their wedding trip in a sleigh constructed of rough boards, the only vehicle which could stand the wear and tear of roads such as we had at that time.

In the summer of 1840, the Presbyterian church at Green Bay gave a call to Rev. Jeremiah Porter (who had organized the first Presbyterian church in Chicago), which he accepted. In the autumn of that year, Mr. Porter attended the meeting of the presbytery held at Prairieville (now Waukesha) where the ministers after due deliberation agreed to form the Presbyterian and Congregational convention of Wisconsin, uniting the two churches in one body, which in that sparsely settled region proved a wise arrangement. A committee from that body, consisting of Rev. Stephen Peet, Rev. Otis Curtis, and Rev. Moses Ordway, were sent to Green Bay to install Rev. Mr. Porter—the first installation under that convention in Wisconsin. Mr. Porter remained pastor of the church eighteen years, removing to Chicago in 1858, where he became pastor of the Edwards Congregational church. It was a rare privilege we enjoyed in being associated with him and his most estimable wife, of whom I heard the remark once made, "It is a blessing to a household to have them members in it." Very sacred to the members of that congregation, who still remain, is the memory of Mrs. Porter, whose noble life, so full of deeds of self-sacrifice, and words of wisdom and love in the service of the Master, made the world better for her having lived.

In the autumn of the year 1841, our small town was thrown

into quite a flurry of excitement by a visit from Prince de Joinville and suite. It was at the time of the sensation caused by the claim of Rev. Eleazar Williams that he was the "Lost Dauphin," and the object of the prince's visit was supposed to be an investigation of the matter. But it was found that his visit was really made in order to ascertain some facts regarding Mrs. Williams' father, Monsieur Jourdan, whose family had done notable service in the French army. Mrs. Williams was of French and Indian extraction, and was a very handsome woman.

My second visit to Chicago was in June, 1839, when I came from Green Bay on the steamer "Great Western," the largest boat then on the lakes, sailed by Capt. Walker, long and favorably known as a kind and genial captain. Unlike my first arrival, the boat steamed into the river and remained one day. When ready to continue the journey, the steamer passed up the river some distance, and had great difficulty in turning round. Although but six years had elapsed since my first visit, the change was marvelous. Where had been nothing but a stretch of prairie with here and there a house, was now a busy town, laid out in streets with some fine residences and places of business, even then assuming the airs of the city it was destined to become.

About the first of November of the year 1841, I accompanied my sister to her home in Kenosha. At that season the roads were impassable through the country; and we were obliged to take a small steamer which ran from Green Bay to Mackinaw, connecting with the daily line from Buffalo to Chicago. We reached Mackinaw, expecting to leave the same day for Kenosha, but continuous storms prevented the arrival of any boat for more than a week. We were obliged to make the best of the delay, and were very comfortably entertained at the old Laslie House, the landlady, Mrs. Laslie, who well understood cooking, serving us with the famous Mackinaw whitefish in every possible form. In these days of fast locomotion by land and water, this generation can scarcely realize our situation. Detained on an island (most beautiful and interesting I grant, in a pleasant season of the year), where there was no regular mail, on

the verge of winter, with no certainty of the coming of a boat, our situation was not an enviable one. Added to this was our anxiety about my sister's babe, but three months old and far from well. However, a steamer finally arrived and we were once more on our way. We had a pleasant run for a few hours, but a storm having arisen, the remainder of the passage was very rough and the passengers were nearly all seasick. In those days the boats had not more than two state rooms, the berths being arranged on each side of the cabin. Many of us were obliged to have our beds made on the floor, a miserable company, which the reader can better imagine than I can describe. When we reached Kenosha, the lake was so rough we were not able to land, and had to proceed to Chicago, where we took up our quarters at the Lake House, on the North side, delighted to set our feet on land once more. This was my third visit to that city, and I found many changes. The weather was not cold enough to freeze the ground and the mud was fearful. In attempting to cross a street it was a question whether we could do so without sinking a foot deep. We remained there two days, re-embarked on the steamer, and reached Kenosha in the evening in the midst of a snow storm. As the lake was rough the boat could not reach the pier, and the passenges were brought ashore in a large flat boat used in stormy weather for that purpose. There was but one hotel there (a log house) kept by Mr. Whitney, where we were made very comfortable. I spent the winter at Kenosha, and have a pleasand remembrance of these few months in the new town, settled by men and women of enterprise, intelligence, and thrift from the East.

In the spring of 1842, I visited Chicago for a few days, being pleasantly entertained in the family of Mr. Loring Whiting, who occupied the house of William B. Ogden on the North side. In the summer of that year I returned to Green Bay, traveling in a light wagon from Kenosha to Madison, thence to Fort Winnebago, and by the old military road to Green Bay. A week was spent in making the journey. In September, 1842, I married Mr. William Mitchell, formerly from Mackinaw, who was intimately associated with a number of the early settlers

of Chicago—Mr. Robert Stuart, one of the prominent men in the American Fur Company, also Mr. John H. Kinzie and the late Gurdon S. Hubbard. My husband was for several years agent for Mr. Hubbard, selling land at Green Bay for him and transacting other business.

My husband used often to tell a circumstance connected with the beginning of Chicago, showing how little some men could foresee its future greatness. In 1834, a young officer at the fort at Mackinaw, Lieut. Kingsbury, went to Chicago and on his return said to my husband, "Mr. Mitchell, if you wish to invest in property which will double your money in a short time, there is a tract of land in Chicago (I forget the number of acres) which can be bought for $800.00." Mr. Mitchell almost doubted his sanity and answered emphatically, "Mr. Kingsbury, I would not give $800.00 for the whole of Chicago." Lieut. Kingsbury borrowed the money and bought the land himself,— since called "Kingsbury's Addition,"—and realized a fortune from it.

In 1846, business obliged my husband to return to Mackinaw where we resided a year. At that time there were no regular boats running to Green Bay, and no stages, so that persons wishing to go East were obliged to hire a team to take them to Sheboygan or Milwaukee, in order to take the regular boat from Chicago. A gentleman of our place, Mr. Nathan Goodell, who owned a small boat, not nearly as large as the tugs of today, nor as seaworthy, offered to go to Mackinaw provided he could secure a sufficient number of passengers. There were a number besides ourselves who preferred to run the risk on the boat (which had never been on the lake) to undergoing the fatigue of a journey through the woods. The owner of the boat, to convince us of his confidence in its safety, took his own daughters with him. We embarked, many of us feeling that we might almost as safely have reached our destination had we jumped into the river. However, thanks to a kind Providence, the trip was pleasant, without wind, and we reached Mackinaw the third day after leaving Green Bay. Just before landing a heavy rain fell, and as the deck was not waterproof, we were drenched, the water covering the cabin floor to the

depth of an inch, obliging the passengers to sit with their feet on the rounds of their chairs. The same little boat made three trips that summer, but was wrecked when making the fourth.

The remembrance of the year spent at Mackinaw is a pleasant one. As everyone knows, that island is interesting on account of its natural curiosities, and the many associations of an historical as well as of a romantic nature. The society at that time, though small, was composed largely of people of education and intelligence, and with the officers' families in the fort, there was no lack of sociability. Indeed, the inhabitants were obliged to depend upon their own resources during the long winter months, as they were cut off from communication with the outside world except by a mail once a month, brought from Detroit by a carrier on a dog sled. That was the winter of the Mexican war, and as some of the officers had left their families at Mackinaw, there was no little anxiety felt. During the summer the island was a great resort for those seeking health and enjoyment. There was a daily line of elegant steamers from Buffalo to Chicago, nearly always crowded with passengers, who while the boat lay there flocked in every direction to see the sights. They were obliged to climb the hill leading to the fort, and as the boat did not remain more than a couple of hours, it was very amusing to see the scrambling and running when the bell for departure rang. The steamers always carried a fine band on board, thus enlivening the long, and sometimes tedious journey from Buffalo to Chicago.

The business for which my husband had gone to Mackinaw being accomplished, we returned to Green Bay on a small boat, meeting with a chapter of accidents, one of which was the bursting of the cylinder, that obliged us to return to Mackinaw and wait several days before we could secure another boat. This latter was scarcely seaworthy, and before reaching our destination the crank broke, so we came into port with only one wheel.

About the year 1845, there came a young lawyer and wife to Green Bay from Maine, and made their home among us, notwithstanding the greater inducements offered to young business men in Chicago, and other new towns. This was Tim-

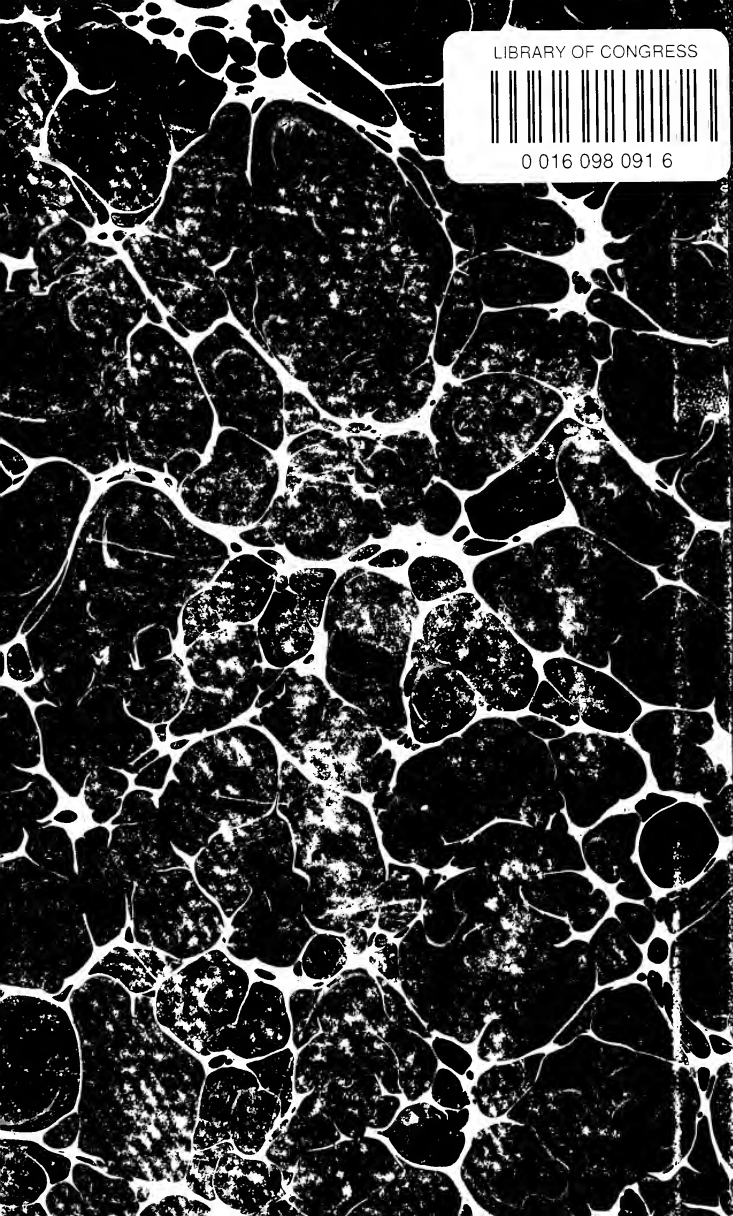
othy O. Howe, in after years so long United States senator from that district, and still later postmaster-general. The interests of his adopted home were ever his own. A man of remarkably genial disposition, he was held in high esteem, and on his annual return from Washington to his cheery home, his cordial handshake was given to all, without regard to position. When a few years since he and his good wife were laid to rest in Woodlawn cemetery, the community at Green Bay felt that their vacant places could not soon be filled.

In the spring of 1850, Rev. Otto Tank came to Green Bay with a colony of Norwegians, purchasing land and settling a little way south of Fort Howard. Both he and his wife were of noble descent, but because Mr. Tank had connected himself with the Moravians, his father had disinherited him. He was appointed a missionary to South America, where he resided some years. His wife having died there, he returned to Europe with his little daughter, where he married a second time. A man of fine education, refined and cultured manners, and strong christian principle, he was esteemed by all who knew him. His wife was a woman of strong character and good business ability, whose hand was ready to bestow of her abundance upon those in need and who gave to all benevolent enterprises, unostentatiously, however, with no name to accompany her gifts. Even when bestowing personal favors, if thanks were given, she would say in her quaint manner: "No, no, I am the Lord's steward, give Him thanks." Although from her conversation we were somewhat acquainted with her former life as having been in the "higher walks," it was not until after her death that her friends became aware that in early life, both by relationship and companionship, she had been so closely connected with men and women of high birth. For a number of years after the death of her husband and daughter, she lived a quiet almost secluded life, in her pleasant quaint home, filled with curios, antiquities, and articles of great value. At her death she left a large fortune chiefly to home and foreign missions, to which she had for years donated large sums.

In 1856, the Fox and Wisconsin River improvement was completed; an event that for years had been anticipated as one

which would make a large city of Green Bay. The day was one of jubilee, when the first boat, the "Aguila," reached there from Pittsburgh, via the Ohio and Mississippi, and thence by means of the improvement through the Wisconsin and Fox rivers. Every bell in the place was rung, the old cannon at the fort was fired, hurrahs were shouted from every quarter, all however, drowned by the unearthly whistle of the boat, whose like was never heard there before or since. To quote from the *Advocate*: "The boat would come whistling into port just as the people were preparing to take their first nap, causing them to spring in alarm from their beds. Then about four in the morning she would give a screech to let people know that she was preparing to go, another to let them know she was ready, another that they had better hurry if they wanted to take passage, and another to tell them she had started and they could not get on if they wished." For a number of years the travel was by these boats, and although it was tedious passing through so many locks, the beauty of the scenery made the trip a pleasant one.

Having come now to the year of the war, which belongs to modern times, the writer feels that these "recollections" may be finished. I will say, however, that for that war Green Bay furnished many brave men, some of whom laid down their lives in its service. My two eldest sons, although very young, enlisted and served as musicians in the "Marching Twelfth" regiment. Two years from the date of enlistment the regiment had marched on foot sixteen hundred miles, had been transported by steamer fifteen hundred miles and by rail six hundred miles. A few months later they accomplished a march of four hundred and sixteen miles in thirty-one days. My sons before they were of age were mustered out and returned home without a wound.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